

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OEXC, CZ

SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA REACTION TO CARTER VICTORY

USIA FOR IEU

1. CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA REACTION TO THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL VICTORY OF JIMMY CARTER OVER GERALD FORD WAS SUBDUED AND RESTRAINED. LOCAL CONTACTS WHO TALKED WITH EMBOFFICERS AT THE AMBASSADOR'S ELECTION RETURNS WATCHING PARTY APPEARED TO BE PULLING FOR NO PARTICULAR CANDIDATE, AND AN OFT-REPEATED QUESTION FROM SOME MFA REGULARS WAS, "WHAT WILL CARTER DO ABOUT EAST-WEST RELATIONS, DETENTE IN PARTICULAR?" AND, "HOW WILL THE ELECTION AFFECT CZECHOSLOVAK-AMERICAN RELATIONS?" ONE LOCAL PAPER SAID, "NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN FOREIGN POLICY ARE EXPECTED." (SVOBODNE SLOVO, NOV 9.)

2. CZECH TV COVERAGE OF THE ELECTIONS WAS SHORT AND RELATIVELY FACTUAL. FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMENTATOR OLDRIK VEJVODA, WHO COVERED THE ELECTIONS IN US, APPEARED ON CAMERA WITH A COPY OF P AND C- PROVIDED BOOK, "JIMMY WHO," AND GAVE SHORT RESUME OF HOW THE ELECTION WENT. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF HOW CPUS FARED, ALTHOUGH PRE-ELECTION PROPAGANDA ATTEMPTED TO PRESENT CARTER, FORD AND GUS HALL AS THE THREE MAJOR CANDIDATES, WITH INDICATIONS THAT CZECHOSLOVAKS EXPECTED CARTER TO WIN.

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3. NOVEMBER 6 EDITION OF PARTY JOURNAL RUDE PRAVO INTERESTINGLY

JUXTAPOSED A TERSE PAGE 3 REPORT NOTING PRESIDENT HUSAK'S MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER ALONGSIDE LENGTHY REPORTAGE ON LOCAL CELEBRATION OF SOVIET GREAT OCTOBER REVOLUTION. SAME EDITION CARRIED LARGELY FACTUAL REPORT ON PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S INITIAL POST-ELECTION PRESS CONFERENCE, WITH EMPHASIS ON OVERALL CONTINUITY OF US FOREIGN POLICY.

4. MEDIA EFFORT WAS TO NOT ATTRACT UNDUE INTEREST IN THE AMERICAN ELECTIONS. AT SAME TIME, CARTER AND HIS FP POSITIONS REMAIN LARGELY UNKNOWN TO THEM, SO THIS APPEARS TO BE A "WAIT AND SEE" INTERVAL FOR LOCAL PRESS-TV-RADIO.
BYRNE

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